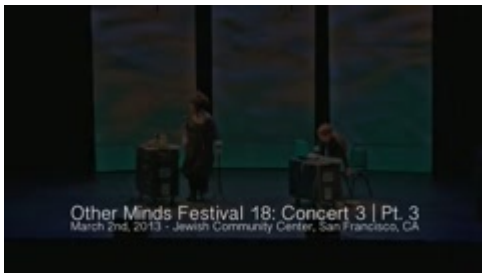


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Other Minds Festival: OM 18: Panel Discussion & Concert 3 (video) (Mar. 2, 2013), 4 of 4



Identifier

OMF.2013.03.02.c2.D

Object Type

Digital Moving Image

Musical Selections

[an improvisation], for voice and electronics (2013) (8:07) / Pamela Z & Paula Matthusen -- Scared Song, for voice and electronics (1986) (6:00) / Meredith Monk [arr. by Pamela Z]

Description

The third and concluding concert of the 18th Other Minds Festival of New Music (OM 18), held on March 2, 2013, began with a panel discussion featuring the night's composers and some of the performers. The discussion moderated by Other Minds Executive and Artistic Director Charles Amirkhanian begins with Canadian composer Aaron Gervais discussing his new composition "Work Around the World," which is the third in a series of compositions that feature as their text one word in translated into multiple languages. Paula Matthusen who will wear a stethoscope on stage then talks about how her interest in incorporating the amplified sounds of the heartbeat into one of her pieces was partially derived from her need to calm herself down when performing. Danish musician Michala Petri then tells us how she would have probably stopped playing the recorder if, in addition to the many baroque pieces written for this simple yet versatile instrument, it had not also been utilized in so many contemporary and electro-acoustic works. Sunleif Rasmussen, a Faroe Island composer who does write for the recorder, then describes some of the challenges and rewards of doing so. This is followed by Swedish composer Mattias Petersson talking about electronic music and video art collaboration with Fredrik Olofsson which is to receive its U. S. premiere during this evening's concert. Multimedia performance artist

Pamela Z then relates how she and Paula Matthusen prepared for the evening's featured improvisation, and the occasional challenges electronic musician face when trying to figure out which one is making which sounds during an improvisation. Throughout the discussion a number of the composers also describe their gratitude for being able to spend time together at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program prior to the Festival.

The concert then commences with:

Work Around The World

"Work Around the World" is the third Around the World piece that I have written, taking a single word—in this case work—and presenting it in a wide variety of languages. In each piece in this series, I explore the nuance of meaning that the word has across languages and contexts. The mezzo-soprano sings each of these words in 12 different languages. Her voice is also looped and delayed strategically throughout the piece to create counterpart and harmonizations. This material is juxtaposed against four percussionists playing glockenspiels, xylophones, and non-pitched percussion. This instrumental setup provided me with an unusual and interesting palette that stretched my materials in new directions. For instance, the mezzo is the lowest pitched instrument in the ensemble and the only sustaining pitched instrument, making any traditional notion of voice + accompaniment impossible. On the other hand, pairing the mezzo with a looping device creates an "ensemble" that contrasts to the four percussionists. As such, we find ourselves with two roughly equal groups of very different sounds. The dialogue between the groups becomes the main focus of the piece as they "work" through the process of developing the material. —Aaron Gervais

Vogelstimmung

In 2008/2009 I was composer in residence with the South Jutland Symphony Orchestra for whom I composed a recorder concerto for Michala Petri called "Territorial Songs". Later she asked me to write a solo piece, and I decided to use the material from the concert. I had in mind to let the music of the recorder be like I imagine it is for a bird when he is flying. Some notes appear and are there for a short while, and then disappear, and as they disappear new tones appears and so on and so forth. In the long second movement I use the technique of singing and playing simultaneously, in the effort to get a third way of letting the tenor recorder sound. I got the title for the piece when I was in Vienna and there I saw some drawings by Paul Klee. They were called "Vogelstimmung". One was called "Vogeltragoedie" and another was called "Vogelkomedie". Therefor the first and third movements are called "Vogelkomedie 1 and 2" and the second movement is called "Vogeltragoedie". —Sunleif Rasmussen

sparrows In supermarkets

In the supermarket down the street from me, a family of sparrows has taken up residence, having found a convenient location above the bakery aisle. I'm intrigued by such moments when the boundaries between different environmental and acoustical spaces are reconfigured. "sparrows in supermarkets" seeks not to convey literal birdsong, but rather to examine snippets of melodic repetition as they inhabit different, and at times surprising, spaces. The piece was commissioned by and is dedicated to Terri Hron, and is featured on the album, "Bird on a Wire II: Flocking Patterns." —Paula Matthusen

Ström

"Ström" is a minimalistic piece for five loudspeakers, live-electronics and live-video, based on an open-minded, artistic approach towards electricity. The piece is an attempt to transfer electric currents via sound to the audience. The five speakers in the surround system struggles to take over the sonic stream like electro-magnets. Sine waves and noise rotates with breakneck speeds around the listeners, tries to charge them with static electricity and, as an ultimate goal, even make them levitate. The video part is in direct connection with the sound and is generated out of five discrete lines – one for each channel in the surround system. The lines are treated in different ways, and as the high voltage builds up in the music they look more and more like electric

wires, inflicting each other with violent discharges and eruptions. —Mattias Petersson

...and, believing In...

"...and, believing in..." was written as part of the re-thinking mary project spearheaded by Eve Beglarian and in collaboration with Corey Dargel, Joseph Hallman, & Joshua Palay at the Atlantic Center of the Arts. Special thanks to Sophocles Papavasiliopoulos for additional feedback and contributions in developing this piece.

—Paula Matthusen

Note: Video is very dark and sound levels are low for this recording.

Improvisation

A live improvisation featuring Paula Matthusen on electronics with Pamela Z providing her trademark vocalises and additional electronic effects

Scared Song

In 2009, I was contacted about a recording project that was in the works. Meredith Monk's House Foundation for the Arts and Paul Miller (aka DJ Spooky, that Subliminal Kid) were planning to produce a double CD of various composers doing remixes and reinterpretations of Meredith's music. I combed through the suggested pieces they sent me, but I didn't see the work I had in mind on the list. I asked if I could make a version of "Scared Song" and, to my delight, they were fine with that choice. I selected that piece because it was my favorite song on the first Meredith Monk album I ever owned. In the early to mid 1980s, when I first began my experiments using electronic processing to layer and loop my voice, various people approached me and commented that I must have been influenced by Meredith Monk. I was embarrassed to admit that I was completely ignorant of her work. After numerous people continued mentioning this, I eventually decided I should look into it. I bought a copy of "Do You Be" (on vinyl) and instantly fell in love with her work. When I listened to the ensemble pieces on the B side, I could understand why people made the comparison. I could definitely see a connection to the way she was working with layers and repetitions of minimal and sometimes wordless melodic material, even though I was using multiple digital delay lines to do this, while she was hocketing phrases between a beautifully blended ensemble of voices. I also felt a kinship with the quality of vocal color she cultivated. Needless to say, I went back and purchased more of her recordings and sought out her live performances and screenings of her films whenever possible. But to this day, that very first track I heard continues to resonate for me as quintessential Meredith. To create my version of Scared Song, I used samples of my voice in place of the organ and piano parts, and then sang the melodic material over that. It's more of an arrangement than a remix, but I did make a small sample of the piano from her record as a nod to the "remix culture" out of which the project was born. Other than the one piano sample, the source of all the sound on the recording is my own voice. When the compilation was finally mastered and ready for an early 2012 release, I was asked to perform my track at the CD release event in New York. I was startled because I had built the piece entirely in the studio with no thoughts of performing it live. Fortunately, my arrangement was based on my usual style of layered vocal fragments, so I managed – with much programming, finagling, and practicing – to work out the live. —Pamela Z

Note: The performance of "Work Around the World" was made possible with the support from the Canadian Council for the Arts and Russ Irwin, and was commissioned by Other Minds. The performances by Michala Petri and Mattias Petersson were made possible with support from the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundations and American-Scandinavian Foundation.

People

Other Minds Festival (features)
Matthusen, Paula (features)

Z, Pamela, 1956- (features)
Monk, Meredith (features)

Related Collection

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[Other Minds Festivals](#)

Related Objects

IM.OM.FP.0018a.055
[Paula Matthusen during an improvisation with Pamela Z during the third and final concert of OM 18, San Francisco CA \(2013\)](#)
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[Pamela Z performing during the third and final concert of OM 18, San Francisco CA \(2013\)](#)
IM.OM.FP.0018a.059
[Pamela Z performing during the third and final concert of OM 18, vs. 2, San Francisco CA \(2013\)](#)